

**EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA  
8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2016– 6:30 P.M.**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>April 2015- APRIL 2016</b>	
		<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Edna Elijah, Chair	P	7	0
Austin Scott, Vice, Chair	P	4	3
Gregory T. Boardman	P	4	3
Towana Bonaparte	P	6	1
Dr. Ciara L. Bostick	P	5	2
Maureen S. Dinnen	P	4	3
Jennifer Gordon	P	4	0
Rochelle Horowitz	P	5	2
Deniece Jones	P	6	1
Jennifer L. Kimmey	P	6	1
Sam L. Mitchell	A	3	3
Dr. Maureen Persi	P	5	2
Jonathan Schwartz	P	5	1
Betty Shelley	P	4	1
M. Elaine Wilson	P	4	3
Lauren Wood	P	3	0

**Appointed Members to the Board: 16  
Needed to constitute a quorum: 9**

**Staff**

Junia Robinson, staff liaison  
Charles Webster, BCPS liaison  
Betty Shelley, Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Association

**I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – Chair, Edna Elijah**

**II. Attendance by Roll Call – Chair, Edna Elijah**

**Determination of quorum**

As of this date, March 17, 2016, there are 16 appointed members to the board, which means 9 would constitute a quorum. At this time, there is a quorum.

### III. Approve minutes (February 18th, 2016)

**Motion** by Ms. Maureen Dinnen, seconded by Mrs. Elaine Wood, that the said minutes for February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 be approved. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

### IV. Guest Introduction/Presentation:

- Nathan Balasubramanian, Ph.D. Executive Director, Strategy & Continuous Improvement, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS)
- Ms. Leslie Brown, Chief Portfolio Services Officer, (BCPS)
- Dr. Valerie Wanza, Chief School Performance & Accountability Officer (BCPS)

Dr. Balasubramanian (Dr. B) began by introducing his Staff including Ms. Leslie Brown, Mr. Charles Webster, Coordinator of Governmental Affairs and Mr. John Sullivan, Director of Legislative Affairs.

Dr. B started his presentation by asking Board members to follow the PowerPoint Presentation that he brought (see attached).

Dr. B explained that he will attempt to explain school grades and assessments through the PowerPoint with of course questions and answers. He started by using examples from elementary schools to answer the question “why do we look at school grades in more ways than one”? Mr. B stated “regarding school grades we need to know how did the State come up with these numbers”. He continued by saying “if I cannot understand these numbers, I can’t use them or interpret them etc... Dr. B asked “what is in the school grades? If you look at what is “in the school grades”, it’s predominately driven by how students are doing on a standardized test. Dr. B continued his presentation by explaining student achievement, school grades and how grades are defined in the State of Florida (please refers to PowerPoint presentation attached). Dr. B acknowledged a few additional guests to include City Manager, Lee Feldman, Assistant to City Manager, Hal Barnes and Dr. Valerie Wanza, Chief School Performance and Accountability Officer.

Ms. Leslie Brown talked about the success of Walker elementary through the arts program with a new principal and Staff. She said the school has gone through a “360 degree” change. Ms. Brown says Staff is teaching kids through the arts with partners from Broward Center for Performing Arts. Ms. Brown said the school is growing and they are on the right track of going up.

Dr. B said that Walker elementary school grade is currently an F, but based on what’s happening now in the school, they are confident that the grade will go up. Dr. B concluded his presentation by thanking the Board for having him and opened the floor for questions and comments regarding school grades/performance.

Chair Elijah thanked Dr. B and his Staff and asked the City Manager if he would like to say anything. Mr. Feldman greeted the Board and introduced himself as the City Manager of the City of Fort Lauderdale for five years. He continued by

saying "I will tell you that there's probably a clear difference between perception and reality. My comments will be more based upon perception. So we know that there are lots of factors that make a City great those factors are your place, cleanliness, public safety, economic development and quality of schools. Broward County has a really good reputation for quality of schools however; I think the perception now is that all that quality is not necessarily basing the City of Fort Lauderdale. We have from an economical development standpoint and from a quality of life standpoint, a perception that we need to address. The perception is that "if you want quality education you basically have to look at alternatives to public schools and while I appreciate the explanation on grades; everybody who is looking at a map or who is looking to relocate to this area doesn't have the benefit of your presentation. They get the benefit of looking at the real estate website that say this school has that grade and that school has this grade. When they're starting to look at where they're going to locate, the grade whether justified or not has a very large impact on location and that as people are starting to look at where they bring their kids and where they move their families and businesses, we are on the lower side of the equation".

Mr. Feldman continued by saying "we actually see demographically and not just this year it's been over a series of trends that when you have kids that are becoming to school age you tend to move out west and when you have kids that are no longer of school age, you are moving back. So that tells us that theirs an issue at least with the perception of schools that causes some in county migration. In addition, Fort Lauderdale is a City that continues to grow where growing vertically as opposed to horizontally out and we are starting to see a new demographic coming to the downtown". Mr. Feldman said "we recently got approved by Broward County for another 5,000 residential units and I would be glad to come back in a future meeting and show you all the growth that is happening in the downtown right now, in the last year we have added 2,000 residential units to the downtown and we have 2,000 more that are under construction right now and another several thousand that are in the pipeline and depending on how strong the market remains for multi-family residential we're going to see projects that are continually being built. He continued by saying "If you look around and drive around you will see our new City bird is the crane. If you look around the streets, especially on a weekend you will see something you haven't seen for years and that is strollers being pushed downtown and that means that families are moving in young families are moving in and the question is can we retain them or will they in three years from now start looking at moving out west and we will lose that and have this intra-county migration pattern. Mr. Feldman said "we prepared these maps to give you sort of a visual and again this is not necessarily what's really happening in the classroom every day, I think everybody is committed to having the best education but this is what the market sees, and basically it shows you that if you want to put your kid in a Fort Lauderdale school you have to be pretty much on the east side of town which candidly is the least affordable part of the town and so that causes again this issue that we have in terms of maintaining a strong diverse community when people want to leave". He said now if not this meeting perhaps next meeting, we will talk about our Neighbor Survey and the 2 things people are not happy about are traffic and schools. Mr.

Feldman said “I can do something about traffic but I can’t do too much about the schools”.

**V. Current business**

**A. Charles Webster – Broward County Public Schools**

Mr. Webster announced the next Community Education Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM at Piper High School. He encouraged Board Members to attend this meeting.

**B. City Staff update – Junia Robinson**

Ms. Robinson announced that Principal Angela Brown will be attending the meeting in April. She also said that the Principals at the Marine school are scheduled to attend at a future meeting.

**VI. Communication to City Commission**

**VII. New/Future Business**

**Next Meeting and Closing**

The next meeting is scheduled for, Thursday, April 21, 2016

City hall, 8<sup>th</sup> floor conference room